

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/780,031

Examiner

Eric Wendler

Applicant(s)

PARK, JONGMIN

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– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address–

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the Request for Continued Examination filed on 11/22/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-50.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date 4/15/06.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 11/22/05
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☒ Other Updated EAST search history.



RICHARD ELMS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is responsive to the following communications: the Request for Continued Examination and the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 22, 2005.
2. Claims 1-50 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 21, 25, 31, 35, 47, and 49 are independent claims.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on November 22, 2005 is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97 and has been considered by the examiner.

Drawings

4. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: **V_{SPH}, paragraph 0052; V_{CEL}, paragraph 0057; V_{CPH}, paragraph 0058; V_{SRF}, V_{SPT}, paragraph 0064; V_{CRF}, V_{CPT}, paragraph 0065; V_{ITM}, paragraph 0069; and V_{BEH}, paragraph 0072.** Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and

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informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-50 are allowed.

6. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of record discloses various methods of programming and circuitry comprising "split-gate" FETs, which include first and second source/drain regions, a floating-gate electrode, and a select-gate electrode. Some of these methods of programming involve changing and controlling the voltages applied to the first and second source/drain regions between nominal and programming voltages and nominal and programming-inhibit voltages. However, the prior art fails to disclose a method of programming involving changing a select voltage applied to the select-gate electrode from a nominal select value to a programming-enable select value such that, in an instance where the FET is to remain in its erased condition, the select voltage starts to change from its nominal value to the programming-enable value after the second voltage starts to change from its nominal value to the programming-inhibit value and such that the FET (a) remains in the erased condition if the second voltage goes to its programming-inhibit value or (b) enters the programmed condition if the second voltage stays largely at its nominal value. The prior art also fails to disclose select-gate control circuitry that applies voltages to the select gate in the programming method described above. This subject matter is claimed in amended independent claims 1, 21, 25, 31, as well as in new independent claims 35, 47, and 49. Because claims 2-20, 22-24, 26-30, 32-34, 36-46,

48, and 50 depend upon the allowable independent claims, they are therefore also allowable over the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Haddad et al (5,077,691) and Chen et al (5,978,267) teach the use of program-enable and program-inhibit voltages being applied to source/drain regions in methods of programming. Tuan et al (6,355,524) and Lee (5,943,261) teach structures of "split-gate" FETs, and Lee also teaches a method for programming which includes applying a lower-than-threshold voltage to the select gate to enable electron injection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Wendler whose telephone number is (571) 272-5063. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Elms can be reached on (571) 272-1869. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

EJW
4/15/06